

September 25 2001

Magalie R. Salas
Office of the Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 - 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Re: *In the Matter of Federal State Joint Board on
Universal Service*, CC Docket No. 96-45.

Dear Ms. Salas:

I represent the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio ("PUCO") in this proceeding and I am writing to you in that capacity.

Accompanying this letter is a copy of a Finding & Order (F&O) released by the PUCO on September 13, 2001. This F&O was issued pursuant to the FCC's directive set forth in CC Docket No. 96-45, which required each State commission to certify that all of the State's rural carriers are eligible to receive federal high-cost support (including high cost loop support, local switching support, high cost support received pursuant to the purchase of exchanges, high cost model support, and hold harmless support) and will use such funding only for the provision, maintenance, and upgrading of facilities and services for which the support is intended, consistent with § 254(e) of the Telecommunications Act of 1996.

As you can see from the attached Order, every Ohio rural carrier previously identified by the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) as eligible to receive the aforementioned federal USF support has filed with the PUCO a sworn affidavit demonstrating their intent to utilize such funding in a manner consistent with Section § 254(e) of the Telecommunications Act of 1996.

In addition to the rural carrier F&O, we have attached a copy of an affidavit from one of Ohio's non-rural carriers, Alltel Ohio. As with the F&O, this affidavit is also being submitted pursuant to requirements set forth under the FCC's CC Docket 96-45, and demonstrates Alltel's intent to utilize any interim hold harmless funding only for the provision, maintenance, and upgrading of facilities and services for which the support is intended.

Accordingly, the PUCO certifies that all of the above-referenced carriers have indicated in writing their intent to use the funding only for the provision, maintenance, and upgrading of facilities and services for which the support is intended, consistent with § 254(e) of the Telecommunications Act of 1996.

Please send me a time-stamped copy of this letter in the enclosed self-addressed envelope (an extra copy of this latter is enclosed for that purposes). Otherwise, if you should have any questions or comments regarding this submittal, please direct them to Michael Dorrian, Utilities Specialist 1, at (614) 644-8102.

Respectfully Submitted

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cc: Irene Flannery, Universal Service Administrative Company